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BASIC SKILLS RESOURCE CENTER:
Military Educators Resource Network
Interim Report

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) → The Military Educators Resource Network (MERN) is part of the Basic Skills Resource Center which provides military educators with information on basic skills and continuing education. This interim report on the MERN (1) provides a detailed overview of the needs assessment used in designing the information component of the center; (2) describes the operational design of the center; and (3) presents initial assessment results on the center. <i>Keywords:</i>		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Basic Skills Resource Center Military Educators Resource NETWORK: Interim Report

In Spring 1981, the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) contracted with InterAmerica Research Associates to operate the Basic Skills Resource Center (BSRC). This project consists of two interfacing components: the design, implementation, and coordination of a learning strategies research agenda in the area of adult basic skills and continuing education, and the design and implementation of an information service. The purpose of this report is to outline the current status of the activities and tasks undertaken and complete, relative to the information component, entitled the Military Educators Resource NETWORK (MERN).

This report describes the planning, operational design, and initial operation phases of the NETWORK. The report discusses and delineates information about activities such as the conduct of a needs assessment undertaken to provide project staff with an empirical base for the design of the information service. In addition, detailed information is provided about activities related to the specification of an operational design plan for the information component. A design plan was necessary to specify clearly the purpose and objectives of the NETWORK, the primary and secondary user groups, the services to be provided, and the content and focus of these services.

Implementation of the operational design plan began in March 1983 which marked the provision of the following services: (a) an inquiry response service, (b) a referral service, (c) a publication development and dissemination service, and (d) a current awareness service. A status

summary of these services for the initial five month operational period is included in this report.

The Inquiry Response and Referral Services responded to a total of 68 requests from a total of 57 clients. Of the 57 individuals who contacted the NETWORK, 47 were first time users of the NETWORK services. As anticipated, the Education Service Officers were the most frequent users of the NETWORK's services (25 contacts), while Army researchers were the second most frequent user group with a total of 15 contacts. The mode of contact utilized by the NETWORK's users included 39 inquiries by telephone and 27 requests by mail. No requests were received through the answering machine mode established by the NETWORK.

Requests responded to by the NETWORK staff vary in type based on the information needs of individual users. Specific contacts included: 29 inquiries for database searches and citations, 21 requests for points-of-contact for programs and research projects, and 24 requests for education-related materials. Additional contacts included: 29 contacts by users to ensure that their names were included on the NETWORK's mailing list and 13 requests for additional information about the NETWORK's services and products.

The Publication Development and Dissemination Service is designed to promote awareness of the NETWORK within its intended user groups as well as provide users with a mechanism for the continual exchange of new information in the adult continuing education field. This service includes the development and dissemination of a brochure and rolodex card, a newsletter, and a fact sheet. The NETWORK brochure and rolodex card

were distributed to the NETWORK's target audience in March 1983. The initial issue of the quarterly newsletter, entitled the NETWORK Circuit, has been prepared and is being readied for distribution in July 1983. The first issue of the fact sheet, entitled NETWORK Fact Sheet, is currently under review by ARI and TAGO personnel and is expected to be disseminated by the end of July 1983.

The Current Awareness Service includes the periodic release of copies of current tables-of-contents of selected professional journals of interest to military educators. This is accomplished through publication of the NETWORK Vanguard whose first issue is under review by ARI and TAGO personnel. July 1983 is the projected release date for this issue of the NETWORK Vanguard.

The NETWORK operational design plan includes assessment activities focused on the various information services. A preliminary set of telephone interviews has been conducted with users who have contacted the NETWORK. These users generally indicated that they contacted the NETWORK once over its five month operational period and that they would certainly use the NETWORK's services again. The materials provided in response to their requests were judged to be "somewhat useful" and to "meet their expectations." The NETWORK staff who assisted them were reported to be very helpful and provided an "excellent turnaround time" for responses to their questions.

Overall, much has been learned through the planning, design and initial operation of the information component of the BSRC. Continued efforts need to be maintained to encourage use of the NETWORK's services which have been judged to be useful by the NETWORK's target user population.

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MILITARY EDUCATORS RESOURCE NETWORK

INTERIM REPORT

This interim report is intended to outline the current status of activities and tasks undertaken and completed in reference to the Information Component of the Basic Skills Resource Center (BSRC), Contract Number MDA 903-82-C-0169. The preliminary mission set forth for the Information Component was the provision of a knowledge base for Army educators involved in the delivery of services and research in adult basic skills education. In order to accomplish this mission, InterAmerica staff were charged with undertaking and completing a needs assessment, developing an operational design for the Information Component, implementing the design plan, and assessing its effectiveness. To date, the needs assessment and operational design activities have been completed and the design plan has been implemented. Currently, project staff are assessing the effectiveness of the design plan concurrently with its operation. Thus, this report provides a detailed overview of the needs assessment activities that were completed in order to identify the general operational parameters for the Information Component. Second, the report contains a description of the operational design relevant to the information services to be provided through the Information Component. Third, the report provides a summary of the implementation and status of the information services. Finally, the report presents the results of preliminary assessment activities regarding the effectiveness of the operational design.

Needs Assessment

Work began on the Information Component in April 1982 with the undertaking of a needs assessment designed to assist InterAmerica project staff in the development of an information service for military educators. It was necessary to undertake a needs assessment in order to provide project staff with an empirical base for the design of the information service and to address the following design issues:

- o assess the information needs of potential user groups,
- o identify what information should be included in the Center's database, and
- o determine how that information should be made available to users.

A needs assessment plan was developed by project staff that would answer the following specific questions:

- o Who should the Information Center serve?
- o What services should be provided by the Information Center?
- o What products should be available through the Information Center?

The plan also delineated the users to be surveyed, identified survey instruments and interview guidelines to be developed, and outlined procedures for data synthesis and analysis. Data were collected from April through June 1982 through scheduled interviews with personnel at the Adjutant General's Office (TAGO) and the Army Research Institute (ARI), site visits to Army installations, dissemination of a

questionnaire to Army education staff within the Army's Continuing Education System and a review of reports, regulations, and learning centers/libraries. Data were synthesized during July 1982 and resulted in the identification of issues and recommendations related to the following items:

- o useability of currently available sources of information;
- o potential user groups;
- o subject areas to be included in a database;
- o desired format of products to be produced;
- o potential frequency of use;
- o preferred methods of accessing the Information Center; and
- o acceptable turnaround times for information requests.

A detailed report, entitled "Basic Skills Resource Center: Information Component Needs Assessment Report" (Russo, Rivera, DeCarme, and French, 1982) was prepared and submitted to ARI and TAGO staff for review in August 1982. Based on the review and recommended modifications, the report was finalized and an approved version of the report was disseminated in September 1982.

Design Plan

Following the completion of data collection activities related to the needs assessment, InterAmerica project staff began the development of a design plan for the Information Center. The design plan was developed to specify clearly the purpose and objectives of the

Information Center, the primary and secondary user groups, the services to be provided, and the content and focus of these services. A draft design report, entitled "Basic Skills Resource Center: Military Educators Resource NETWORK Design Plan" (Rivera, Russo, and DeCarme, 1982) was submitted to ARI and TAGO staff for review in September 1982. Based on a review of the proposed plan, InterAmerica staff finalized the report and submitted and disseminated the approved design plan in October 1982.

The results of these combined efforts established an information service to be referred to as the Military Educators Resource NETWORK. The NETWORK has as its mission the provision of up-to-date information to practitioners, researchers and policymakers within the Department of the Army relative to educational research and program development issues concerning basic skills and continuing education.

Goals

In recognition of this mission, the following goals have been established:

- o to provide information related to educational programs for use by Army educators, researchers, and policymakers;
- o to develop a computerized database of information not currently available to Army educators; and
- o to establish an effective means of providing access to the NETWORK's services within DA.

Services

In order to accomplish these goals, four services are to be provided to the NETWORK's user groups. These include:

- o Inquiry Response Service -- provides assistance to inquiries from users in the form of abstracts and citations of resources identified by the NETWORK staff from a variety of sources.
- o Referral Service -- provides information about points-of-contact for military research and educational programs which are included, when appropriate, with responses to inquiries.
- o Publication Development and Dissemination Service -- two publications are developed by the NETWORK staff in order to maintain a mechanism for reporting new information in the areas of adult and continuing education to users. A newsletter, entitled the NETWORK Circuit, is published quarterly; and a factsheet is disseminated intermittently that is entitled the NETWORK Fact Sheet.
- o Current Awareness Service -- informs military educators about the most current literature and resources in the field. Periodically, users are provided with a copy of the NETWORK Vanguard which includes photocopies of the tables of contents of key journals in education-related fields.

Implementation of the NETWORK Design Plan

The completion of the NETWORK design plan successfully moved the BSRC Information Component from a planning stage into an implementation stage allowing InterAmerica staff to begin the development of the NETWORK'S computerized database. The computerized database provides the NETWORK staff with the capability and information to respond to user requests via the inquiry response service and to provide points-of contacts or referrals to relevant individuals and organizations.

Computerized Database. The NETWORK's database involves the development of two interrelated record formats. One record format has been designed to include citations of bibliographic information related to description of items such as reports, journals, articles, and books. These citations assist staff in responding to inquiries for information about research and program development activities related to topical areas such as basic skills curricula descriptions, instructional planning, and computer-assisted instruction.

The basic content of each bibliographic record or citation incorporated into the database includes a description of the following items:

- AN -- Accession Number
- AU -- Author
- TI -- Title
- TP -- Publication Type
- SE -- Serial Number, Volume Number
- DA -- Publication Date
- PU -- Publisher
- LA -- Language(s)
- PD -- Physical Description
- AV -- Availability
- PR -- Price/Order Number
- AB -- Abstract
- DE -- Description
- DB -- NETWORK Bibliographic Database
- EN -- Date Entered

A second record format has been designed to include citations related to descriptions of ongoing research, Army education programs in operation at various installations, and a variety of human resources or points-of-contact related to issues of interest to the NETWORK's users. These database records aid staff in directing or referring users to new or additional resources which help them meet their information needs.

The basic content of each human resource citation incorporated into the database includes a description of the following items:

- AN -- Accession Number
- PC -- Person In Charge
- TI -- Title
- DA -- Dates
- PA -- Performing Agency
- TA -- Target Audience
- GV -- Government Status
- CP -- Contact Person
- SP -- Supporting Agency
- AB -- Abstract
- DE -- Descriptors
- DB -- NETWORK Human Resource Database
- EN -- Date Entered

Design specifications for both record formats have been finalized. In addition, computer programs have been developed, pilot tested and are in operation, allowing data technicians to keypunch data records for

entry into the database. Roughly 400 data records have been entered and validated. On a continual basis records are entered into the database at the rate of approximately 70 per week. As previously noted, the content of each database record contains a description of a variety of items (e.g., author, title, publication type, etc.). Table I and II are intended to highlight the types of data records contained in the database based on publication type and key descriptors, respectively. The numerical totals depicted in these tables are not discrete totals, but rather overlapping totals since database records often contain more than one key descriptor and can be described by more than one publication type. For example, a paper presented at a professional conference related to a review of the literature of learning strategies on the acquisition of English as a second language would be described as a Conference Paper and Information Analyses relative to publication type; and would contain key descriptors related to English as Second Language and Learning Strategies and Basic Skills Education.

Inquiry Response and Referral Services. During the month of March 1983 the NETWORK staff formally began its Inquiry Response and Referral services. These services were initiated by the dissemination of the NETWORK brochure and rolodex card which described the NETWORK services and products to the intended user groups. Table III depicts the total number of requests responded to by the NETWORK. In addition, the table presents the monthly contacts, requests, and first-time-contacts through July 1983. In total, 68 requests have been made from a total of 57 clients. Of the 57 individuals who have contacted the NETWORK, 47 have used the NETWORK for the first time.

TABLE I
NETWORK DATABASE CITATIONS BY PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT TYPE

PUBLICATION/DOCUMENT TYPE	TOTAL
Books	14
Collected Works	24
Dissertations/Theses	3
Guides	133
Historical Materials	12
Information Analyses (Literature Reviews, State-of-the-Art Papers)	24
Journal Articles	140
Statistical Data	8
Viewpoints (Opinion Papers, Position Papers, Essays, etc.)	33
Reference Materials	50
Reports	261
Speeches, Conference Papers	51
Tests, Evaluation Instruments	15
GRAND TOTAL	768*

* Represents overlapping totals

TABLE II
NETWORK DATABASE CITATIONS BY SELECTED KEY DESCRIPTORS

KEY DESCRIPTOR	TOTAL *	KEY DESCRIPTOR	TOTAL *
Adult-Basic-Education	36	Literacy-Education	45
Adult-Education	25	Materials-Development	20
Adult-Literacy	48	Mathematics-Instruction	45
Adult-Programs	24	Micro-Computers	27
Adult-Reading-Programs	55	Military-Training	34
Basic-Skills	47	Program-Descriptions	40
Computer-Assisted-Instruction	91	Program-Development	30
Curriculum-Development	28	Program-Effectiveness	33
Daily-Living-Skills	41	Program-Evaluation	57
Educational-Research	31	Programmed-Instruction	21
English-Second-Language	71	Reading-Comprehension	26
Functional-Literacy	31	Reading-Instruction	83
High-School-Equivalency-Programs	33	Reading-Material-Selection	31
Illiteracy	27	Reading-Skills	41
Individualized-Instruction	35	Reading-Materials	31
Instructional-Materials	77	Teacher-Education	21
Job-Skills	25	Teaching-Methods	62
Job-Training	20	Tests	26

* Represents overlapping totals.

TABLE III

NETWORK CONTACTS

	<u>TOTAL CONTACTS</u>	<u>TOTAL REQUESTS</u>	<u>TOTAL FIRST-TIME CONTACTS</u>
MARCH	18	26	17
APRIL	17	20	13
MAY	8	8	5
JUNE	7	7	5
JULY	7	7	7
TOTALS	57	68	47

Table IV presents a monthly and total description of the clients or users who have contacted the NETWORK. As anticipated by the needs assessment, the Education Service Officers have used the NETWORK's services most often (25 contacts), while Army researchers have been the second most frequent user group of the NETWORK with a total of 15 contacts.

TABLE IV
NETWORK CLIENTS

	<u>EDUCATION SERVICE OFFICERS</u>	<u>EDUCATION SERVICE SPECIALIST</u>	<u>GUIDANCE COUNSELORS</u>	<u>RESEARCHERS</u>	<u>EDUCATORS</u>	<u>ADMINISTRATORS</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
MARCH	12	1	5	7	-	1	-
APRIL	7	-	-	5	6	1	1
MAY	3	-	-	2	-	2	1
JUNE	2	-	1	1	-	2	1
JULY	1	-	1	-	-	1	4
TOTALS	25	1	7	15	6	7	7

A description of how users have contacted the NETWORK is presented in Table V. In total, 39 inquiries were received by telephone, 27 requests were received by mail, and two requests were received at the NETWORK's exhibit (recorded as "other") at the Tenth Worldwide Armed Services Education Conference. It should be noted that no requests have been recieved through the answering machine mode established by the NETWORK. This suggests that this mode of inquiry may not be a viable option for the receipt of user requests.

TABLE V
MODE OF CONTACT

	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>MAIL</u>	<u>ANSWERING MACHINE</u>	<u>OTHER</u>
MARCH	21	5	-	-
APRIL	6	12	-	2
MAY	4	4	-	-
JUNE	5	2	-	-
JULY	3	4	-	-
TOTALS	39	27	-	2

Table VI presents an overview of the types of information requests responded to by the NETWORK staff. Requests are first categorized as "general requests" or "topical requests." General requests included 29 contacts by users to ensure that their names were included on the NETWORK's mailing list, and 13 requests for additional information about the NETWORK's services and products. Requests categorized as "topical requests" included 29 inquiries for database searches and

citations, 21 requests for points-of-contact of programs and research projects, and 24 requests for education-related materials. The "topical requests" have been categorized by subject area and are presented in Appendix A. The actual, but edited slightly, requests have been classified into the broad subject areas delineated by the scope of the NETWORK's computerized databases. These are: Instructional Materials, Instructional Planning, Computer-Assisted Instruction, and Other Areas.

TABLE VI

INFORMATION REQUESTS

	GENERAL REQUESTS			TOPICAL REQUESTS	
	MAILING LIST UPDATE	ADDITIONAL INFO ON NETWORK	DATABASE CITATIONS	POINTS OF CONTACT	OTHER MATERIALS
MARCH	6	3	14	11	11
APRIL	12	2	8	6	4
MAY	4	3	4	2	5
JUNE	3	2	2	2	2
JULY	4	3	1	-	2
TOTALS	29	13	29	21	24

A targeted concern identified during the design stage of the NETWORK is the useability of the NETWORK's services and products by Army educators located at installations overseas. Table VII and VIII present monthly and total overseas contacts and clients, respectively. To date, 11 requests have been recorded and responded to by NETWORK

staff from a total of 10 overseas clients. All 10 contacts were initial contacts by these clients. Overall, 10 clients were Education Service Officers and one client was an Education Technician. All overseas requests were received by mail with the exception of one request that was recorded at the Tenth Worldwide Armed Services Education Conference.

TABLE VII

OVERSEAS CONTACTS

	<u>TOTAL CONTACTS</u>	<u>TOTAL REQUESTS</u>	<u>TOTAL FIRST-TIME CONTACTS</u>
APRIL	6	7	6
MAY	2	2	2
JUNE	1	1	1
JULY	-	-	-
TOTALS	9	10	9

TABLE VIII

NETWORK OVERSEAS CLIENTS

	<u>EDUCATION SERVICE OFFICERS</u>	<u>EDUCATION TECHNICIAN</u>
APRIL	5	1
MAY	2	-
JUNE	1	-
JULY	2	-
TOTALS	10	1

Publications and Current Awareness Services. The Inquiry Response and Referral services previously described are complemented by the NETWORK's Publications Service and Current Awareness Service. The Publications Development and Dissemination Service is intended to promote awareness of the NETWORK to its intended user groups as well as provide users with a mechanism for the continual exchange of new information in the adult continuing education field. This service consists of three publications which are to be developed and disseminated by NETWORK staff. Included are: a brochure and rolodex card; a newsletter; and a factsheet.

The purpose of the NETWORK brochure and rolodex card is to publicize and explain the NETWORK's purpose and services. A draft brochure was prepared by project staff and submitted to ARI and TAGO for review and approval in January 1983. Following acceptance of the text and design layout for the brochure and rolodex card, they were printed and disseminated in early March 1983. The purpose of the quarterly newsletter, entitled "The NETWORK Circuit," is to provide a forum for regularly communicating information about new research findings, program practices, and exemplary programs to the NETWORK'S audience. The initial issue of the NETWORK Circuit has been developed and approved for dissemination. The Newsletter is currently being readied for printing and is to be disseminated by mid-July 1983. Three additional issues are planned throughout the project cycle and the projected timeline for their development and dissemination is exhibited in the timeline presented in Appendix B.

A third promotional publication includes the development and dissemination of a factsheet which is designed to outline the most important aspects of a particular topic, generally in one or two pages. "The NETWORK Factsheet" is to be published three times during the project cycle. The first Factsheet has been developed and submitted for review and approval to both ARI and TAGO personnel. It is hoped that the initial issue will be approved for dissemination and will be disseminated by the end of July 1983. The development and dissemination of two additional Factsheets are planned during the project cycle. The projected timeline for their dissemination is presented in Appendix B.

Overall, the NETWORK's Publications Service has fallen behind schedule due to the lengthy review and approval cycles. It is hoped that the review and approval process can be expedited to ensure that current timelines can be rigidly adhered to.

The NETWORK design plan also included the provision of a Current Awareness Service that would assist military educators in keeping abreast of information in the field of education as it related to the Army. This service has two components. First is the dissemination of copies of current tables-of-contents of selected professional journals of interest to military educators. This is accomplished through the development of the "NETWORK Vanguard." Project staff have identified a core of professional journals that would be of professional interest to the NETWORK'S target population. The tables-of-contents from these

journals are to be reproduced and provided to users, thereby making them aware of the professional literature prior to other normal flows of communication. The first issue of the NETWORK Vanguard has been prepared and submitted to ARI and TAGO personnel for review and approval. Once approved for release, the Vanguard will be mailed to the NETWORK users. July 1983 is the projected release date for the first issue of the Vanguard. The projected timeline for development and dissemination of the three remaining issues is exhibited in Appendix B.

The second component of the Current Awareness Services is the periodic release of database searches to selected users based on an individually specified profile. This service involves identifying a profile of an individual user's interests, storing it in the computer's secondary memory, and matching the profile against new citations each time the NETWORK's database is updated. A selected group of overseas ESO's will be asked to complete a checklist designed to assist them in defining their topical areas of interest. This customized service is to be undertaken by NETWORK staff as a demonstration study in order to determine its usefulness to users located overseas. Currently, project staff are preparing a draft checklist which is to be submitted to ARI and TAGO staff for review by the end of July 1983. Once the checklist is approved, it will be disseminated to selected ESO's overseas. Based on the individually completed profiles, matched database searches will be distributed to the selected users. The projected timeline for the completion of this service is presented in Appendix B.

Assessment Activities

A final set of activities undertaken by the NETWORK staff focuses on the assessment of the effectiveness of the NETWORK operational design. As planned, the evaluation will maintain both an internal and external focus. The internal evaluation activities focus on the inner operations of the system and involves the maintenance of records regarding project staff's use of the NETWORK's database and document collection, review of the internal processing capability of the computerized database, and the project staff effectiveness in processing responses to inquiries received from users. Procedures and instruments have been developed and placed in operation in order to maintain the collection of information needed to address the internal evaluation issues. Selected portions of these data have been preliminarily summarized and presented in tables discussed earlier in this report. A more detailed synthesis is planned and the results will be presented in the NETWORK's Final Report.

External evaluation activities focus on the assessment of the effectiveness of the operations of the information system as perceived by the NETWORK's users. Evaluative information is collected regarding user satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services and products. Information will be collected from users through the distribution of brief questionnaires or checklists and a series of telephone interviews. Three evaluation checklists are planned; these include the distribution of a checklist with each database search that is

completed in order to assess user satisfaction with the second NETWORK Factsheet in order to solicit evaluative information about the NETWORK's services, except the publications services; and the distribution of a checklist with the second or third issue of the NETWORK Circuit designed to gather evaluative judgments about the NETWORK'S publications. To date, these planned questionnaires or checklists have not been implemented.

As previously cited, a series of telephone interviews will be conducted in order to assess user satisfaction with the NETWORK'S services. A number of interviews have been completed and the results of these interviews are presented in Table IX. Those individuals who were telephoned reported primarily that they have used the NETWORK's service only once; however, all respondents indicated that they would certainly use the NETWORK's services again. The materials that were provided in response to their requests were judged to be "somewhat useful" and to "meet their expectations." The NETWORK staff who assisted them were reported to be "very helpful" and provided an "excellent" turnaround time for responses to their questions.

TABLE IX

EVALUATIVE INFORMATION REGARDING THE NETWORK'S SERVICES

ITEM	RESPONSES*
1. How often have you used the NETWORK'S services? 2. In reference to the materials provided to you by the NETWORK in response to your request, how useful were the materials? 3. How would you rate the turnaround time or response time to your request? 4. Did the information the NETWORK provided to you... 5. How helpful were the NETWORK staff in assisting you with your information needs? 6. Do you plan to use the NETWORK in the future?	Once--80% Extremely Useful--30% Excellent--90% Exceed your Expectations--30% Very Helpful--100% Yes--100% Twice--20% Somewhat Useful--70% Good--10% Average--0% Meet your Expectations--70% Somewhat Helpful--0% No--0% Not Useful--0% Poor--0% Not Meet Your Expectations--0% Not Helpful--0%

* A 25% sample (N=10) was selected from the information requests responded to by the NETWORK.

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Russo, R., Rivera, C., Decarme, J. and French, A. Basic Skills Resource Center: Information Component Needs Assessment Report. Rosslyn, VA: InterAmerica Research Associates, Inc., September 1982.

Rivera, C., Russo, R. and DeCarme, J. Basic Skills Resource Center: Educators Resource NETWORK Design Plan. Rosslyn, VA: InterAmerica Research Associates, Inc., October 1982.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION REQUESTS RESPONDED TO BY THE NETWORK

Instructional Materials

- o I am interested in knowing what other ESOs are doing, and what materials they are using, in their BSEP II programs - in order that my program might be improved. All areas of BSEP II are appropriate but reading is the primary problem here.
- o Our installation is in the process of revising our basic skills program, so I am interested in looking at various curricular materials (reading, writing, ESL, etc.) that might provide direction for our revisions.
- o Please send a list of materials useful for remedial writing/language skills classes -- not for ESL students, but for those needing a refresher in grammar, capitalization, spelling, punctuation, etc.
- o I am interested in obtaining some general information about ESL programs that can be incorporated into existing program.

Instructional Planning

- o I would like a literature search on the quality of learning, insofar as comprehension and attention span are related. I am investigating the possibility that switching learning modes may increase attention span.
- o I'd like to identify self-paced instructional materials for basic skills, especially for reading, math and languages (not ESL).
- o Who delivers education courses or programs via satellite? I am interested in for-credit courses.
- o I want a literature review on pictorial imagery as it relates to reading comprehension.
- o I would like information about the effectiveness of self-paced instruction, caveats to be aware of in implementation and information about which materials work better than others.

Computer-Assisted Instruction

- o Has anyone undertaken objective evaluations of the PLATO basic skills software?
- o I would like some general guidelines on evaluating software/courseware.
- o I have heard of a DANTES-funded project at the University of Missouri to design computer-based correspondence courses. I would like more information on this and some points of contact.
- o We have recently had PLATO terminals installed, so I would like to locate materials to assist in understanding and using the system.
- o I need general information, in way of an overview of the use of computers in education, the available hardware and software, and guidelines for evaluation of equipment and courseware.
- o For my own use, please forward materials which assist those outside the computer field in becoming computer literate.
- o Please send an annotated bibliography on computer-assisted instruction.
- o Please send information on the comparative pricing of software for teaching technical skills, math and languages.
- o I am interested in any information on education technology, including videodisc, that might provide hands-on training in our engineering course.
- o Please do a literature search on the attitudes of instructors, administrators, etc. (users that are not students) toward computer-assisted instruction.
- o Please send general information/articles on computer-based education.
- o I would like a listing of PLATO's basic programs.
- o Are there other instructional evaluations of computer-based education?
- o I would like to locate materials which describe the content validity of PLATO software.
- o I am interested in materials in the area of CAI, self-paced or individual instruction, which could be used on an Apple II.

- o I am interested in software used for basic skills training (e.g., math, literacy, etc.).

Other Areas

- o What is the distribution of reading grade levels for 18-year olds/college level individuals in the U.S.? I want a graph showing a breakdown by sex.
- o What is the response of counselors when the expected outcome of their counseling is not achieved?
- o Please forward a list of educational associations in the Washington, DC Metro area.
- o I am interested in the measurement of basic skills program outcomes, both with the Army's BSEP and also within other military programs.
- o Can you find information concerning a useful predictor for the GT subtest? The SCAT is no longer useful since renorming.
- o I am interested in any publications on mentoring in the military.
- o Do you know of materials which address coping for military families?
- o I am interested in identifying predictive validity of tests, particularly as related to the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education).
- o I would like any information on the history of the development of basic skills programs in the Army.
- o I would like a list of Army education programs.
- o I am interested in information about issues management and crisis management related to educational settings.
- o I would like to see examples of needs assessment forms used in the education sector.
- o I am interested in information on the study of stress factors relating to the performance/endurance of special forces personnel.
- o I would like information about the skill levels of high school students.
- o How could I obtain a copy of the GAO report on the Army Basic Skills Education programs?

APPENDIX B

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NETWORK PROJECTED TASK/TIMELINE

